

Application No.: 09/902,774

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Docket No.: 04970/000J592-US0

REMARKS

This patent application presently includes Claims 5-8, of which Claim 5 was previously rejected, Claim 6 is allowed, Claim 7 was previously rejected, and Claim 8 is newly added. Claim 5 is rewritten in amended, independent form, and all rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claim 5 was rejected as obvious over Younan et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,575,861 in view of Tennant, U.S. Patent No. 4,321,416, in view of JP '803. This rejection is respectfully traversed. None of these references, nor any combination thereof, renders the present claim obvious.

In accordance with the present invention, each solar cell module is formed from one or more sub-modules, and the sub-modules have a plurality of power generating regions. By changing the connection pattern of the power generating regions (e.g. in series or parallel), the solar cell modules produce an equal output voltage even if the solar cell modules are of different sizes. None of the cited references teaches or suggests such a method, nor do they teach or suggest the claimed method of separating the power generating regions. There is not the slightest suggestion that equal output voltage could be obtained even with solar cell modules of different sizes. Accordingly, the combination of these references also could not achieve these aspects of the invention.

Claim 5 was also rejected as obvious over Dillard, U.S. Patent No. 5,928,437 in view of Tennant, U.S. Patent No. 4,321,416. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Neither reference, nor their combination teaches or suggest the present invention. Again, there is no teaching or suggestion that power generated regions be connected in the claimed manner or that they could be connected to achieve the same output voltage even when the modules are different sizes.

For the above reasons, Claim 5 is believed to be allowable. Claim 8 depends from Claim 5 and is allowable owing to its dependence from an allowable claim.

Claim 7 was rejected as obvious over the admissions of prior art in the present application in view of JP '152. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Neither the admissions nor the Japanese reference, nor the combination thereof renders the present claims obvious. In the

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invention as claimed, the positioning of the wiring member that connects adjacent solar cell sub-modules and the solar cell module is completely different from that disclosed in the cited references. According to the admitted prior art and the cited reference, a wiring member is provided in the upper part of the surface of a metal base. In contrast, in the claim, the wiring member is sealed in a resin layer between the metal base and the base section. Thus, the claimed structure distinguishes patentably from the combination suggested by the examiner. Claim 7 should therefore be allowed.

Applicant's attorney has made every effort to place this patent application in condition for allowance. It is therefore earnestly requested that the application, as a whole, receive favorable reconsideration and that all of the claims be allowed as presently constituted. Should there remain any unanswered questions, the examiner is requested to call the applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number given below.

Dated:

Respectfully submitted,

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